

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
Washington 25

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B-121220

August 2, 1957

Honorable Franklin G. Floete
Administrator, General Services Administration

Dear Mr. Floete:

Your letter of April 9, 1957, requests that the discretionary authority granted by our decision of December 30, 1954, B-121220, to the Library of Congress to pay, under certain conditions, unsupported prepaid freight charges shown as a separate item on contractors' invoices when the amount claimed therefor is less than \$25, be extended to all Government agencies.

In our referred-to decision of December 30, 1954, we said:

"The requirement in question [that charges for prepaid freight included in dealers' invoices be supported by a freight receipt] appears essential to establish that the freight was prepaid and the correctness of the amount claimed as reimbursement. The furnishing of the paid freight bill would not appear to impose an undue burden on the dealers affected thereby.

"However, in instances where small shipments of books are made to the Library and the freight charged in the invoice is small and the prepaid receipt is not furnished with the invoice, it is recognized that the amount involved may not justify the administrative expense of writing for the freight bill or of withholding the amount billed for freight until the prepaid receipt is furnished and then processing a supplemental voucher. Accordingly, where, in the light of the Library's experience, the freight charge appears to be reasonable and a bill for reimbursement of prepaid freight is not furnished with the invoice, this Office will not insist as part of its audit requirements upon such bill being attached to the voucher, where the amount claimed as freight charges is less than \$25. Where a supplier who regularly deals with the Library consistently fails to support his invoices with bills evidencing payment of freight charges, it is suggested that--even though the charges are less than \$25--his attention be called to the requirements that the prepaid freight bill be furnished in support of the invoice."

GAO Wash., D.C.

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A receipted freight bill obviously is the best evidence to support a claim for prepaid freight included in a contractor's invoice. However, it is apparent that the factors which impelled our granting of this discretionary authority to the Library of Congress apply with equal force to other Government agencies. Accordingly, that discretionary authority, as set forth in the quoted portion of our decision of December 30, 1954, is hereby extended to Government agencies generally.

Sincerely yours,

JOSEPH CAMPBELL

Comptroller General
of the United States

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FISCAL DIVISION

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